

REMARKS

Entry of this Amendment is respectfully requested. It is believed that this Amendment does not raise any new issues or require any new searching by the Examiner. Furthermore, it is believed that upon its entry, the application will be in condition for allowance or at least reduce the number of issues for appeal. The present amendments were not made earlier as the prior art of record did not necessitate presentation of these limitations. Accordingly, entry of this Amendment and reconsideration in light thereof are respectfully requested.

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action dated December 17, 2003. Claims 13-22 are pending in this application. Claims 13, 17 and 21 are amended herein. Of the claims, only claims 13, 17 and 20 are independent.

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to the drawings because they do not show every feature specified in the claims. Accordingly, new Fig. 6 is presented herein which shows the "strain gauge attached to the hook" as recited in claim 21. The specification is also amended herein at pages 4 and 6 to insert reference to new Fig. 6. It is submitted that no new matter has been added.

Although not objected to, Fig. 2 is amended herein to include the legend "Prior Art". It is submitted that no new matter has been added.

In the Office Action, claims 21 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification. Support for claims 21 and 22 can be found on page 6, line 9 of the specification which indicates that other WR&C fittings such as hooks...are also applicable. It is therefore respectfully submitted that the rejection to claims 21 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, be withdrawn.

In the Office Action, it is stated that claims 13-16, 20 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Khachaturian et al. (US 5,589,646). It is believed that

the Office Action contained a typographical error and the rejection may have been intended for claims 13-16 and independent claim 21, and claim 22 which depends from claim 21.

It is respectfully submitted that independent claims 13 and 21 are not anticipated by Khachaturian et al. as the cited reference fails to disclose all of the limitations of the present invention as claimed in amended claims 13 and 21. Nowhere does Khachaturian et al. disclose that the strain gauge is “attached to the shackle body *such that the strain gauge measures the strain in the shackle body*” as required by amended claim 13. Furthermore, nowhere does Khachaturian et al. disclose that the strain gauge is “attached to the hook *such that the strain gauge measures the strain in the hook*: as required by amended claim 21. As claims 14-16 depend from claim 13, and claim 22 depends from claim 21, it is believed that they too are not anticipated by the prior art of record. It is respectfully submitted that the rejection thereto be withdrawn.

In the Office Action, claims 17-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bruns (US 5,783,755). It is respectfully submitted that independent claim 17 is not anticipated by Bruns as the cited reference fails to disclose all of the limitations of the present invention as claimed in amended claim 17. Nowhere does Bruns disclose that the strain gauge is “attached to the eye bolt *such that the strain gauge measures the strain in the eye bolt*” as required by amended claim 17. As claims 18-20 depend from claim 17, it is believed that they too are not anticipated by the prior art of record. It is respectfully submitted that the rejection thereto be withdrawn.

In the Office Action, claims 21 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Reder et al. (US 4,660,666) and also by Cheng (US 5,591,943). It is respectfully submitted that independent claim 21 is not anticipated by Reder et al. or Cheng as the cited references fails to disclose all of the limitations of the present invention as claimed in amended claim 21. Nowhere do Reder et al. or Cheng disclose that the strain gauge is “attached to the hook *such that the strain gauge measures the strain in the hook*” as required by amended claim 21. As claim 22 depends from claim 21, it is believed that it is not anticipated by the prior art of record. It is respectfully submitted that the rejections thereto be withdrawn.


For the reasons cited above, all of the claims presently pending in this application are believed to be allowable. Early and favorable action is respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any further questions or concerns, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicant's undersigned attorney/agent.

It is also submitted that no fees are required. However, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees due as a result of this Amendment to Deposit Account 08-2442 of the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,
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Enclosure: Replacement Drawing Sheets